

Yes, there are many computer people attending the conference, but most of them have quite varied interests in other disciplines.

This conference is for computer hackers, music hackers, gene hackers, neurology hackers, medical hackers, education hackers, etc. Of course, not everything will be interesting to everyone, but we try to have a program that will have many sessions appealing to many attendees. Plus, we have many sessions that are added to the schedule during the conference because people talking in the halls and at meals find that there is a strong interest.

Why is the conference in Tahoe?

We want a site that has a warm, friendly atmosphere; can handle our size group; where we can have sessions 24 hours a day; food that's better than "rubber chicken" institutional food; within an hour drive of an airport; and that's at least an hour and no more than a four hour drive from Silicon Valley.

When we met in Saratoga we found that many people chose to go home each night. We feel that it is important for all attendees to stay at the conference site as much as possible. When you're there, you'll have more opportunities to schmooze with others (and they with you). When the conference is too near your house, you don't have to make a commitment to the conference, you can just drop in for a few hours.

We are able to get a lot of value for our money by scheduling our conference in Tahoe between seasons. Other sites we've considered would cost an additional \$100 or \$150 per person, or would be at a "regular" hotel. The site we're using meets our needs very well, except that we can't control the weather.

Why can't I bring a spouse, children, or friends?

There are two aspects to this answer. First, and simplest, there isn't space. Second, and

most important, having outsiders there will change the conference. The weekend is very intense. Outside influences (such as family and friends) will dissipate the energy not just for you, but for the other attendees.

What are the facilities like?

Simply put, we believe that one aspect of a great conference is that the attendees shouldn't be disappointed with the food or facilities. Many people have called the food "a cruise ship on land". In addition to breakfast, lunch, and dinner, there's also a midnight buffet each night to help you stay up for a 2 a.m. session. We try to have a good variety of great food at each buffet so that you can choose to satisfy your diet (or lack thereof).

In addition, there's a large room with a fireplace, piano, couches, tables, and continuous "munchies" and a variety of drinks. This is a good place to sit and talk while grabbing a handful of cookies, some chips and salsa, or other "junk" food. Of course, there's also fruit, cheese, crackers, and many other "munchies".

The rooms are a mixture of condominiums and townhouses. Each condo is divided so there are two separate sections -- one with beds, the other with a bed and a sofa-bed (but each section has their own bathroom). The townhouses typically have three bedrooms and two bathrooms.

What about the price?

The fee includes a shared room, eight meals, munchies, drinks, a shirt, and the conference. Virtually all of the basics are provided. You might want a private room.

The Hackers Conference

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It's the people...

It's the technology...

It's 48 solid hours of peer-to-peer schmoozing..

It's the food...

It's...

The Hackers Conference

Hackers 94.9997

This is your personal invitation to
attend

3-5 November 1995

North Lake Tahoe, California

rsvp

by 1 October 1995



What's a Hacker?

Hackers are experts in their field who try to do the impossible... who push the envelope of technology. They are not the people who break into computer systems. Hackers are the people who created the Personal Computer industry and built the Internet.

There are many definitions of a "Hacker", even two quite opposite meanings. One definition means something very positive and another means something very negative. Many people use the term as a compliment while some news reports use the term to mean a criminal.

A Hacker, in the positive sense of the word, is someone who is excited (intrigued, interested) by the challenge of doing things that other people say are nearly impossible -- someone who has great fun finding the way to succeed by inventing an interesting solution. Hackers often enjoy just trying to find a way to do the impossible even if they don't actually succeed. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology these people were referred to as "Hackers" and this is the term that has survived. To easily understand what's a Hacker, watch the Movie *Appolo 13* and you'll see a few real Hackers depicted -- both in space and on the ground (remember the CO2 filter...).

Computer Hackers find it challenging to figure out how operating systems and networks work, and to make them do things not thought possible. The telephone system became the challenge for a few Hackers who discovered undocumented features. Even though very few people broke into the phone system, they caught the attention of the news media and the police. Unfortunately, the media began using the term "hacker" when referring to virtually all such crimes, totally ignoring the original positive meaning of the word and the fact that very few real hackers were involved.

The Hackers Conference: A Bit of History

The original Hackers Conference was held in 1984 in Marin County, California. It was organized by Stewart Brand and the people at Whole Earth and The Point Foundation. The conference was catalyzed by the publication of Steven Levy's book *HACKERS: The Heroes of the Computer Revolution*. Stewart felt that it would be really great to get some of the people mentioned in that book together for a weekend and "see what happened". It was a resounding success. The attendees had a great time, and a video documentary resulted which aired nationwide on PBS.

In early 1986, the subject of the Hackers Conference came up in an on-line discussion on the WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link). "Why not do it again?" In late 1986, we had managed to put together Hackers 2.0, which was held at a summer camp in Saratoga, CA. Since then, we've been holding The Hackers Conference each year, but no longer at a summer camp.

What's the conference like?

The weekend is a virtually continuous, high-powered, energetic exchange of ideas between the movers and shakers from a wide variety of disciplines — a catalyst for the future. Most conferences have an audience and invited speakers. At The Hackers Conference, everyone is expected to contribute and share -- it is a conference of people sharing with their peers.

Although you will occasionally hear someone say "Wow, I was just talking with Don Knuth", even famous people are treated as any other attendee. Some famous attendees have said that it was great to be able to just be "one of the attendees".

There are demonstrations or impromptu sessions going on all day and all night. The free exchange of ideas is important to making the

conference work. Partly for that reason, the few press attendees are told that everything said or overheard outside of the plenary sessions is strictly off the record unless otherwise specifically arranged.

What The Conference is not...

The Hackers Conference is not a "computer conference". It is not dedicated to any one computer, to any one technology, nor even to just technology.

The Hackers Conference isn't a science fiction "con". Nor is it a gathering of crackers, phone phreaks, or criminals. We use the term "Hacker" in its older and respectable form rather than in the way that the media has abused the word.

The Hackers Conference also is not a trade show with booths, exhibits, and "marketroids". But we do have a large area dedicated for the many attendees who show off their own works-in-progress, and their newest and greatest toys - especially those things that they themselves have created.

Who is invited to The Conference?

Prior attendees suggest people to invite who will bring something to the conference: some idea, contribution, energy, or whatever it is that makes the conference succeed. We believe that the attendees are Hackers: people who enjoy pushing the envelope, bypassing limits, discovering knowledge, inventing solutions, and adventuring into uncharted areas.

I'm not a computer person, why should I attend?

One of the key aspects of The Hackers Conference is that it is a catalyst for solutions to challenges and the creation of new ideas. Something special happens when a group of creative people from quite different fields get together to discuss interesting challenges -- they often come up with unexpected solutions.